

CASA of Cochise County News & Views

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Abby Dodge & Family

We've survived another month of social distancing! I'll be honest, I really thought things were going to let up sooner than this, but apparently that's not the case. I hope everyone is hanging in there and finding ways to remain active, both physically and mentally. I'm struggling a little with the lack of social interaction, but technology helps.

One lesson that I've learned through all of this is that we have so many options with technology to stay connected to those we love. I'm a little embarrassed to admit that we weren't taking advantage of the many options that exist to stay in touch with family out-of-state until now. I mean, we used Skype and other video options to make sure the kids get to see their relatives, but we've really upped our game over the past few weeks. We had a fun family vacation scheduled to Florida for

Coordinator's Comments

the end of May (**had** being the key word there), so we had a few family meetings over Zoom to discuss our options. Sadly, Florida and the beach are not in the cards for us anymore –**but**, now we've mastered getting all of the siblings and cousins together on one screen and making the best of a bad situation. So that's one thing that we plan to continue long after this is over. If you haven't been able to stay connected with your friends and family, I highly recommend using Zoom, FaceTime, Skype, Facebook Messenger video calls – anything really that allows you to see/hear the other person. It's not as good as in-person contact, but it's better than a basic phone call in times like this.

Now that I've got you thinking about how the contact between you and your loved ones may have changed over the past month and a half, let's talk about contact with your CASA kiddos and your case! I hope by now you've settled into some kind of a routine with your CASA kiddos. If they're little, it may just be you speaking with the placement. If they're old enough to enjoy seeing you over one of the video-call options, that's always a plus. If they're teenagers, a text every now and then may be what gets you through this time. We just need to continue to be creative. I was reviewing contact logs the other day and I read that a CASA had visited with her child from afar by having the child up on the apartment balcony blowing bubbles while the CASA was down in her vehicle watching. She said that she enjoyed the activity as much as the child did – what a great idea! I didn't ask for permission to share this story, so I figured I'd leave the CASA anonymous.

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Coordinator's Comments (Continued)

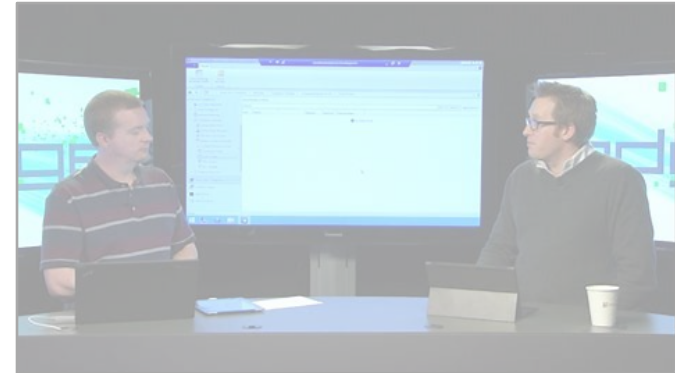
On that note, I learned this story from reading her contact log. You're probably sick of hearing from us about contact logs by now, but too bad... It's not like you have too many places to go to get away from me at the moment. 😊

As much as I love learning about what you're doing with your CASA children, the other aspects of case management are just as important when it comes to logging your time/miles spent. Don't forget about the time spent reviewing your case file online, talking to other team members, researching things about your case, talking to your coordinator... Anything case-related counts as time spent on your case – and any miles that you may drive (you're probably not driving that many at the moment) count as well! Don't sell yourself short on the amount of time and effort you're donating by only logging your actual visits with your child. I know that the term "contact log" does make it sound like there needs to be some contact between you and the child, but really, it's just "*contact*" with the case as a whole.

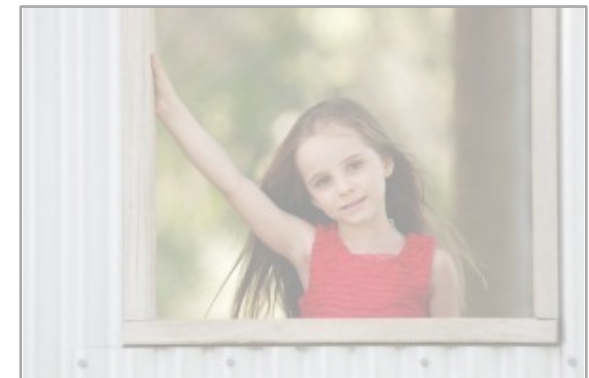
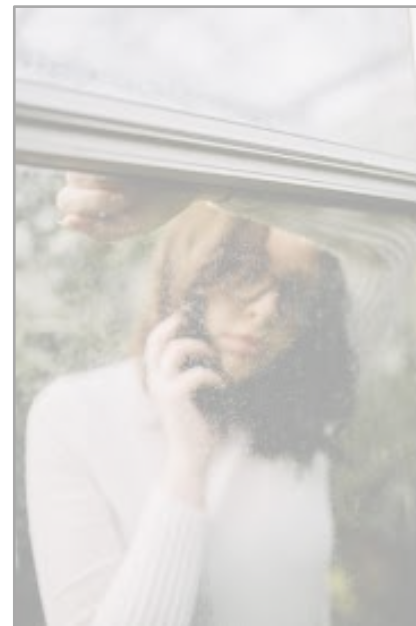
As always, thanks for being so patient with all the changes to court hearings and other things that have been impacted by COVID-19. I really appreciate your dedication to your cases and your children, now more than ever.



Keep it up and hopefully we'll be able to get together in person again soon!



Social Distancing



visiting through windows

New Feature in CASA News & Views ~ We Need Your Help

by Karen Fasimpaur, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

I love the CASA community! You all are awesome, and whenever I have an opportunity to interact with other CASAs (which unfortunately isn't often enough), I learn something. And Abby and Lissete are amazing and have been super helpful to me personally. Any time I have a question, which is often, they are there with a ton of helpful advice.

On a recent CASA Zoom support call, a few of us brainstormed a way to share more of this helpful information and to bring more CASA folks into the conversation so we can all learn from each other.

So we are introducing "Dear Abby et al," a new column in the CASA newsletter.

The idea is to invite everyone to send in by email any questions they have for Abby, Lissete, or for other CASAs to answer. Then we'll all have a chance to offer our suggestions, and I'll compile them and share back out through the newsletter.

So send your first round of questions by email to me at kfasimpaur@casaaz.gov. For this round, try to have your questions to me by **May 15th**.

And I'll start with a couple of questions I have that you all are invited to weigh in on:

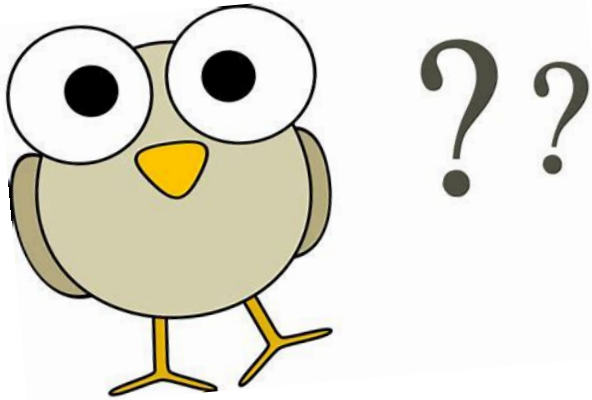
- How are you interacting with your CASA kiddos during the pandemic? What's working and what's not?
- How and what do you usually present at a court review hearing? What have you found to be most effective?

Email your thoughts on these to me at kfasimpaur@casaaz.gov. (We can include your name with these, or not...your option.)

I hope you'll all join in on both asking questions and offering your advice. I know I'll gain something as a result, and I hope you will too!

The following page launches "Dear Abby et al". Looking forward to your questions/comments!





Dear Abby et al

important to remember that this would need to happen outside of the CFT meeting, as that is not the purpose or intent of the CFT.

What you would want to do is request a professional staffing.

Any team member can request

this, and it allows for an opportunity for the parties to come together to discuss topics that aren't usually addressed at the CFT – or in this case to clear up contradictory information. I would recommend going to this staffing prepared with a list of questions that you need answered; questions that will help address the specific contradictions. This will allow the person providing contradictory information the opportunity to clear the air. But do so delicately without accusing anyone of spreading misinformation. A good way to bring it up would be something like: "I'm getting the impression that there is some confusion over [the permanency goal/next steps/whatever the confusion is about] and I think it would be helpful to have a professional staffing to ensure that the team is all on the same page."

If you need any support with this or you aren't having any luck getting one on the schedule – reach out to your coordinator. We will gladly help and can attend the staffing with you, if you'd like. Making sure that everyone is receiving the same information is so important, so this should be done sooner rather than later if you're having issues.



Dear Abby et al: How would you deal with a situation where the case manager is giving contradictory information to different parties in a case?

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

DEAR CAUGHT: Nothing good ever comes from situations where parties are receiving contradictory information, regardless of who is providing this information. However, you want to tread lightly to ensure you maintain a strong working relationship with all parties, especially with the case manager. The best thing to do is to get all the parties together and have information provided to everyone at the same time. This isn't always easy to do, with having to juggle multiple schedules and workloads.

But, it's important to alleviate any confusion among the parties. It is also

SUPPORT



Adapting to a Different Way of Life

by Arian Lee, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

This sure has been a different way of life for all of us. I am on my first CASA assignment, and never expected to be video conferencing and calling for all of our visits. My CASA kiddos are so happy to get any form of communication.

I will admit that I broke the social isolation rule to take over an Easter basket for them to share. It was filled with items to get them outdoors and active. (Off of electronics). Mom tells me that as soon as I left, they were in the backyard having a spray string war.

AWESOME!!! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!!!



**Stay Safe, Stay Home, and
Stay Positive**



*Images from the Internet:
Labeled for Reuse*

Stay Calm

by Karen Fasimpaur, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

This month I attended a webinar from [Prevent Child Abuse Arizona](#) called “Preventing and Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences,” presented by Claire Louge. (They offer a series of weekly webinars. I liked this one and plan to attend more.)

Much of the webinar was about the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) studies that show the connection between childhood trauma and the likelihood of having risk factors for early death in adulthood. Children who experience ACEs are more likely to smoke, be obese, have depression, use drugs, etc. These risk factors (which are also coping mechanisms for stress) lead to health risks that have been shown to often result in disease, disability, and ultimately early death.

I was familiar with this research and was particularly interested in learning what we can do about it. The webinar suggested the following ways we can help:

- Promote resilience
- Promote positive childhood experiences
- Promote protective factors
- Practice self-regulation

Two things the presenter said really struck home with me. One was that we need to emphasize work with the *whole family*, not just the child. The second was in regard to “self-regulation” or taking care of ourselves – she said that as people who work with these families, we need to be *calm* ourselves first.

Well, I admit that I’m not always the most calm person in the room. In times of stress or chaos, I tend to want to *do* something. I have a lot of energy and want to act. Calmness doesn’t always result.

As the presenter talked about how important it is that we remain calm, I thought about a foster parent I’d recently met. In addition to having foster kids, she runs a daycare out of her home and frequently has many young children running around creating a fair amount of chaos. Despite this, she was the most calm person I ever met. She was amazing; just being around her made me feel calm. And that’s what struck me today – being around calm people makes us feel calm even if they aren’t saying or doing anything that immediately resolves our problems. This is a lesson I’m going to reflect on more and try to bring into my own practice.

Another issue Louge brought up was the importance of social connections in relieving stress and reducing trauma. This is especially an issue in these times of coronavirus when we are all feeling isolated and disconnected. Imagine how awful this is for people who are already under seemingly insurmountable stress and now have this piled on top of that.

After the webinar, I wrote a card to a family I haven’t talked to in a while. Just saying “I’m thinking about you” and reminding people that they are loved can go a long way.

Stay Calm (Continued)

1. Promote **Resilience**

Children are more likely to be able to self-regulate when:

- they and their parents could **discuss things that mattered**
- parents **participated in their child's activities** and **knew their friends**
- parents **managed their own stress** around parenting



Responding to ACEs With HOPE: Health Outcomes From Positive Experiences, Robert D. Sege, MD, PhD, Charlyn Harper Browne, PhD, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Washington, DC

2. Promote **Positive Childhood Experiences**

In childhood, did you often/very often:

1. Feel able to talk with family about your feelings
2. Feel that your family stood by you during difficult times
3. Enjoy participating in community traditions
4. Feel a sense of belonging in high school
5. Feel supported by friends
6. Have at least two non-parent adults who took a genuine interest in you
7. Feel safe and protected by an adult in your home



Responding to ACEs With HOPE: Health Outcomes From Positive Experiences, Robert D. Sege, MD, PhD, Charlyn Harper Browne, PhD, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Washington, DC

3. Promote **Protective Factors**

Communities can prevent and address ACEs by supporting families to build:

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Children's Social and Emotional Competence



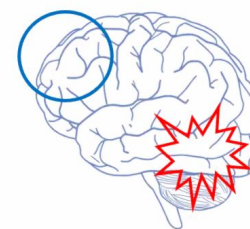
4. Practice **Self-Regulation**

Parasympathetic

Nervous System

"learn, plan, process"

Two Systems:



Sympathetic

Nervous System

"fight, flight or freeze"

Activities

by Mary C Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

I have three teenagers, two girls and a boy who live in three different placements. We communicate regularly, and they all are doing fairly well, but they need more to do. Thank goodness they all go to online school for the next month.

I discussed my concerns with Abby. She mentioned that the CASA Council would consider requests to fund activities in the home. I did get funding to buy the books for the book club that my teen in Tucson and I started. It is a huge success, and I have ordered the 3rd book in this popular teen series. Both of us will get a copy.

I talked to my teen boy about an activity he and his foster brother could do. The two of them researched on Amazon and came up with a game called Far Cry 5, which is a Playstation 4. It was \$32 and will provide hours of fun.

My teenage girl in Sierra Vista told the team at the last CFT that she and her sisters had made a birdhouse. When I talked to her, I asked for more details. She

was quite enthusiastic about sharing her project. She and her sisters had the materials for a doghouse. They put it together and turned it into a chicken coop. They painted it camouflage. It was a house for birds -----chickens. She was happy and proud that they have a new house for their chickens. Caring for the chickens is the girls' responsibility. I asked her to think up more projects, and I would ask for funding for them.

I realized after my conversation with my girl that I do not get enough input from my CASA kids about what we do. I usually make all the plans and we do the activity. I am going to change my way of doing things. I am going to ask for input from my CASA kids and involve them in the planning and encourage them to come up with projects. I am surprised I didn't think of this before, but now, thanks to Abby, I have a new approach. Teens can do anything they want to do, so this is a great idea.

Way to go, Abby!



Trying New Things

by Abby Dodge, Cochise County CASA Program Manager

We're always encouraging our children to try new things, especially if we have something new for dinner – they always have to have a “try it” size. And since we're all feeling rather cooped up and bored lately, Tom and I decided that we should start introducing the kids to new fruits that we've never had before, and we've turned it into a fun part of our routine! I hope that by getting them used to trying things, even when they don't look super appetizing, they will continue to be open to new foods as they get older. They're already not super picky, and I hope to keep it this way.

It started one day when I had to drop some gift cards off at DCS for a family in need, so I popped into Safeway really quickly to see what was available. I was able to get a starfruit and a yellow dragon fruit. From there, it's turned into checking the produce department of any store that Tom or I happen to be in to see what we haven't tried yet. Some of the things we've tried have looked straight up disgusting inside, but so far everyone has tried them! Well, not the dog or the cat, but we've invited them to be part of this routine as well.

What has been most surprising to me during this is how eager Emily is to eat any fruit that is offered to her. Of the 7 things she's tried, starfruit has been the clear favorite. I can say this confidently, because I once caught her pulling the end of a starfruit out of the trash can because she wanted more! Her second favorite was passionfruit, she stole half off the table and worked on it until the rind was completely cleared out. The only thing she didn't really like was papaya.

Caitlin has been my most selective child when it comes to our fruit selection. She often claims to like it but then grimaces after taking a bite... Ethan has enjoyed everything except the passionfruit, with his

favorite being both types of dragon fruit.

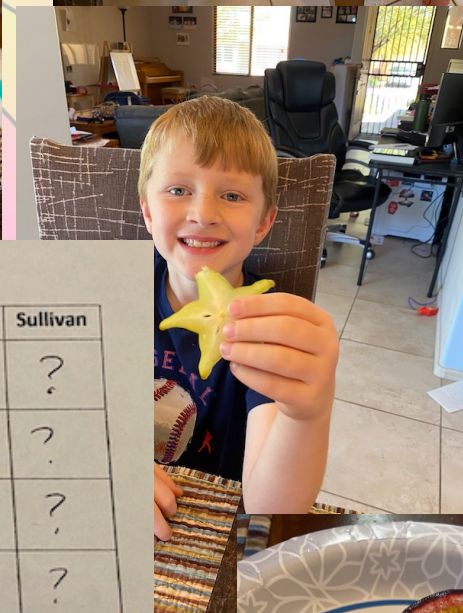
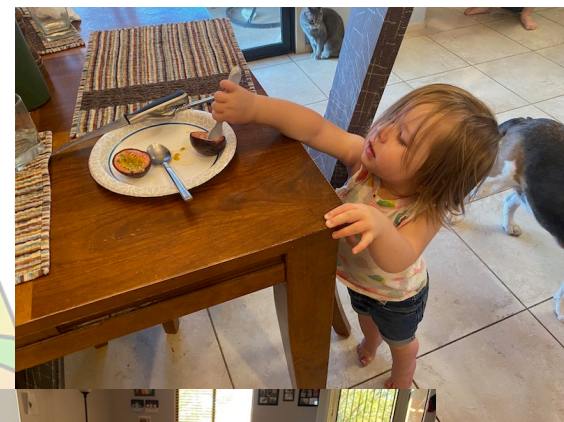
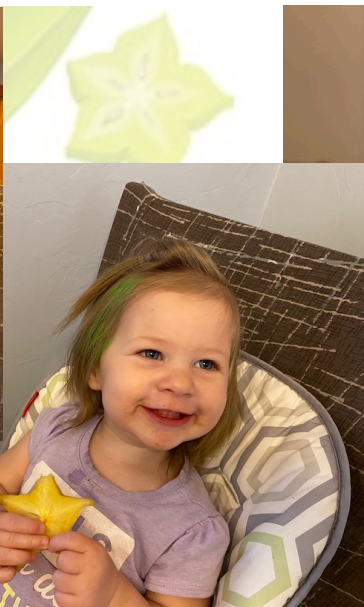
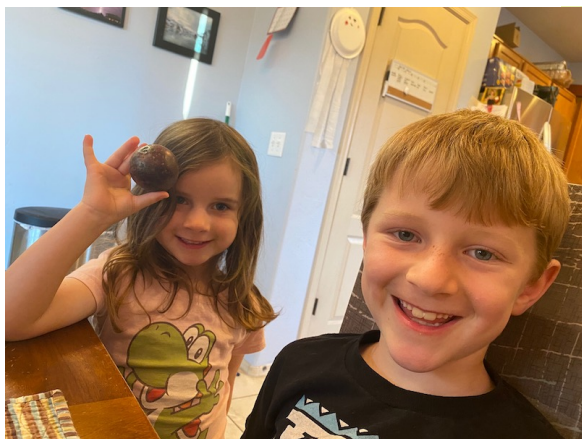
Sullivan, the cat, opts out of most family activities, but I did get him to at least sniff the passionfruit. Winston, the dog, was a willing participant every night, but the only thing he actually tried was papaya and he didn't like it.

To keep track of everything and simultaneously continue helping Ethan learn, we've been keeping a chart of how everyone has reacted to the fruit – it's been a lot of fun! Only problem now is we're having a hard time finding things that we haven't tried already... so if anyone has a lead on any unique fruits – let me know!

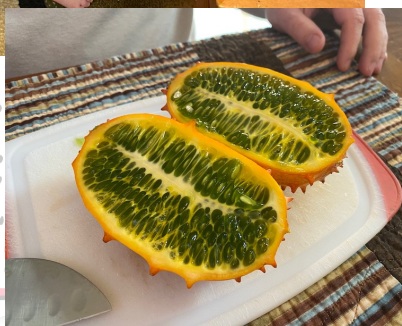


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Trying New Things (Continued)



| Fruit | Dad | Mom | Ethan | Caitlin | Emily | Winston | Sullivan |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-------|---------|-------|---------|----------|
| Yellow Dragonfruit | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | ? |
| Starfruit | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | ? |
| Red Dragonfruit | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | ? |
| Kiwano Melon | 😊 | 😊 texture 😊 taste | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | ? |
| Mango | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | ? |
| Papaya | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | ? |
| Passion Fruit | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | 😊 | ? |



Thank You for Giving Your Heart

by Mary Kay Holcomb, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

Hi! Some of you know me and a lot of you are new and I haven't met you. Hello to all the new CASAs, and Thank You for giving your heart to our beautiful children.

I have been a CASA for 13 years and it is my life. I have always worked with children and it is my true love. My mother always said, if she couldn't find me, she would look to see where small children were and there I would be. I come from a big family of seven children and the best parents in the world. I was child number 3. When my mother was pregnant with number 7, she was 44 years old and wouldn't buy anything for the baby until it was born. After my sister Beth was born, I was sent to JC Penny to buy baby items. I was in the eighth grade. I know the saleslady thought I was crazy. But it was so much fun to buy for my new sister.

I have worked many years with special ed children in the Oak Harbor School District. Oak Harbor, Washington is a military town and when Desert Storm started, the district got a grant for two of us to be trained as Intervention Specialist. It was my dream come true. We were trained by a wonderful MSW that would meet with us every two weeks to go over our cases and teach us something new. I have worked with all kinds of problems with children and I hated to retire. I have also worked a lot with autistic children (who all are so full of love even when they are angry).

When my husband retired, he wanted to follow the sun as he was a lineman for a power company for 34 years. Living on an island was always fun with the storms. We started out RVing and got to Sierra Vista and decided this was our new home. My heart is always with Whidbey Island, but I have learnt to love Sierra Vista and the wonderful people.

I always wanted to be a CASA and a lady at church talked to me about it and just happened to have an application in her car. I think she got Ned Letto and me the same day.

It has been my life being a CASA. Some of my cases have been really hard and tears have flown, but when you know you are making a difference in a child's life, it is worth all the heartache and tears. I have had 27 children adopted and each one is a special story.

My first case was three beautiful children that had to be kept together and it was hard to find a family that wanted to take all three. They finally found a home. I always start my first meeting, if the children are older, by having them draw a picture. Each one of the children, ages 9, 7 and 4, drew a heart. I wanted to cry but today these children are doing wonderful in their adult life. One is 21 and is in the Army, the next one is 20 and studied to be a medical assistant, and the third is a senior in high school where he is involved in basketball and wrestling. They were adopted by wonderful parents and are in Connecticut now. Their biological mother found them last year on Facebook and the daughter (the 2nd child) has seen her mother but the boys, at this time, don't want to.

Then I had a case where a little boy was put in the system as a baby. His parents weren't feeding him enough as well as other things. After a long battle the baby was finally adopted by wonderful parents. A few years later the biological mother shows up pregnant again and the baby was taken at birth. He was adopted by the wonderful people that adopted his brother. Then a few years later the mother was pregnant and again the baby was taken and adopted by the wonderful family that adopted the baby's two brothers. That made six children in the home and the case was not very easy, but because of the love of this

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Thank You for Giving Your Heart (Continued)

family, they went through it three times. This family kept us all going as they wanted these children so bad and they are a beautiful family.

One other case I had was three children, a teenager and two younger children. They were all wild and it took a lot of control on my part to not get upset with them. One climbed out my car window; he won't do that again. The teenager wanted to go live with her Dad, although he hadn't been in her life very much, but he moved to Sierra Vista to be there for her. The case settled with the two younger children going back to their Mom. The teenager went to live with her Dad. A few years ago, I saw her and her Grandmother in the store. We were talking and I told her that I was so sorry that I couldn't have helped her more. She hugged me and said, "You were the only one that cared about me." We never know just what good we do.

Another family had no children and they became foster parents to three children that had horrible lives - ages 14 months, 3, and 5. The 3-year-old was a boy with autism. He couldn't do anything at all. It was decided after a few weeks that the autistic child should be put in a more specialized home, so he was finally moved. The two little girls just bloomed with the love and respect of their foster parents. It was not easy for the foster parents as the children had had so much trauma in their lives. But with the foster parents' patience and love, the girls are amazing. They were adopted by this wonderful family and they are growing up as beautiful, happy children. Their brother started going to a preschool program where he was such a handful. Some days he would be sent home and was always so angry. He had a special education teacher that was just awesome to him. One day the DCS worker came and told the teacher that he will probably be sent to a long-term care facility as he isn't adoptable. This teacher went home and talked to her husband about the little boy and they decided to adopt him. It was a hard, difficult process for them, but they now are the proud parents of this exceptional child. One day this little boy came up to me and asked to sit on my lap and he gave me a big hug

and asked if I would be his Grandmother. He never would let you hug him before. They moved to be near family and the child is awesome. He is in kindergarten and is reading at 1st grade level and loves to take engines apart and see how they work. They took him to a carnival once and he didn't want to do the rides, he wanted to see how they worked. This is my love story as it just shows what love and respect can do for a child. Oh yes, he now is telling his parents that he needs a baby brother.

These are just a few of my children. Some of the stories haven't turned out the way I wanted them, but we have to remember that we are doing the best with what we have at the time.

Some things from my experience as a CASA:

If I work with older children, I always asked them to draw a picture. You can learn so much about a child from their pictures.

In a new case with children, I will bring a puppet along because you can learn a lot when the child can talk to a puppet. Bring the puppet out and let the child do the talking, you might have to ask the puppet a few questions to get the child to talk.

Never, never tell a child, "I know you are sad". The child is thinking that you don't know a thing about it. It is better to say, ***"You look sad or unhappy. Do you want to talk about it?"*** This way, you are giving the child permission to talk to you by saying this to them.

One of my foster mothers always used a calendar in her folder. I have started to do this and it is so much easier to have everything together. I then put the dates in my home calendar to have another way of remembering.

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Thank You for Giving Your Heart (Continued)

If you are doing an art project with your children, please do the project yourself as the child is more relaxed with you doing it, too, and you can talk about it which leads to conversation. Children don't like us to just sit and stare at them when they are doing something.

When you see a child misbehaving and you think, "What is wrong with that parent?", just remember that the child may be autistic and the parent is doing the best they can. It isn't easy being a parent of an autistic child.

If you ever go to court and you feel uneasy about leaving the building alone, just ask one of the guards to walk you to your car. They are all very caring and look out for us.

Remember to work with your attorney, DCS, and other agencies involved in your case. They are a world of knowledge and I have always found them so helpful.



Mary Kay and her son with Baby Vivian, born in October 2019

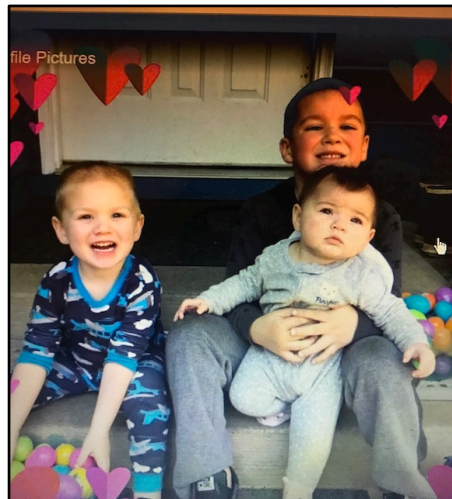


We have been so blessed to have judges that believe in CASAs as it really helps to know that they read our reports and listen to us in court. After all we are the **Eyes and Ears** for the children.

Abby, Lisette, and Roxanne are wonderful. They really listen to us and give good feedback when we need it.

When you are having a bad day with your case, just remember you are making a big difference in the life of a child. You might be the first person to show them any kind of love.

Hope these suggestions help; they are things that I've learned along the way.



Mary Kay's grandchildren at Easter

Arthur, 6; Weston, 3;

Vivian, 6 months

Growing up on Whidbey Island On their new boat



More About the Book Club

by Mary C Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

It took us three weeks to discuss our book once we got started. We both liked discussing it, and my girl begged for me to get the 3rd book as soon as possible. I thought we should purchase it together, so I told her we would do it once we could resume visits.

The fourth week I was worried that we would not have enough to talk about since we had finished the book. Not true! Discussing something that my girl could relate to opened the way for a lot of conversation. Somehow, we got on favorite movies. My girl informed me that she would kill to get the Star Wars series. I was a bit taken aback by this, so I asked her what she meant. She laughed and told me that all the teens now say something is to kill for if they really like it. It is a new teen saying. I wasn't in the loop for teen sayings when I was a teen, and I never have understood them. But I know teens like having their own special language, and I also know they like to use it but would probably be shocked if I used it, so it works out well for me to listen, and when I talk for me, to use boring, everyday language.

Somehow, we got to talking about what she might like to do for a career. She was hesitant to commit, so I mentioned how clever she is with computers, cell phones, and all things mechanical. I asked her how she learned how to do all this. She paused and told me, "I just know." We talked about technical programs in high school, and she was interested.

This phone call was the most relaxed visit we have ever had. We were still going strong when it was time for her to get off the phone.

I have always considered that riding in a car together is one of the best ways to draw out a CASA kid. Now I am realizing that our book club has brought our ability to talk, really talk, to each other, to a whole new level. I have ordered each of us a copy of the 3rd book in the series.

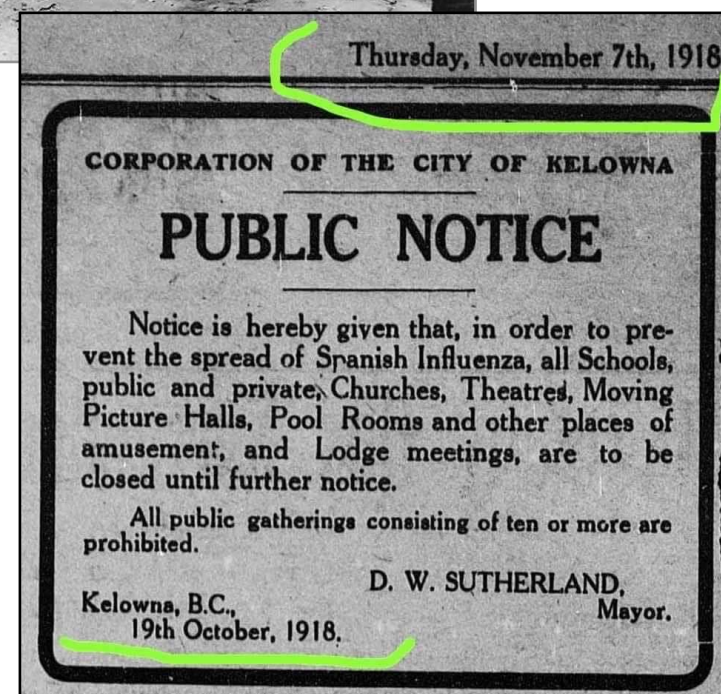
Hip, hip, hurray for book clubs!



Then and Now



Photos making
the rounds on
the Internet



Then and Now (Continued)

Poem
making
the
rounds
on the
Internet

See Note
Below

History repeats itself. Came across this poem written in 1869, reprinted during 1919 Pandemic.

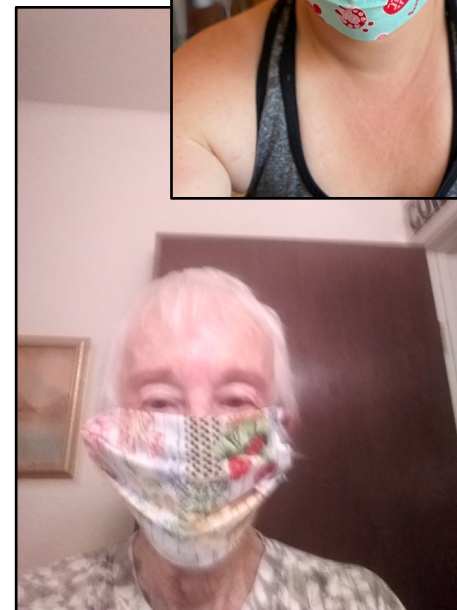
This is Timeless....

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth
Just as they were healed.



April 2020

Our very own Abby and Mary with fashionable masks, courtesy of Mary Kay Holcomb!



***** **Kitty O'Meara is the poet laureate of the pandemic.** Her untitled prose poem, which begins with the line, "And the people stayed home," has been shared countless times, on countless backgrounds, with countless fonts, since its first posting. **It was written in 2020.**

<https://www.oprahmag.com/entertainment/a31747557/and-the-people-stayed-home-poem-kitty-omeara-interview/>

Technology and More

by Mary C Blanchard, Cochise County CASA Volunteer

My new life of social distancing has forced me to turn to technology and my friends. Bud Dragoo helped me learn to sign on to Zoom. It is very straightforward, but I am a dinosaur. My first attempt to connect to a Zoom support group took me 30 minutes to join the meeting, and I could either *hear* or *see*, so I chose to hear. A family get-together was my next Zoom experience. By then I realized that the speakers on my computer had volume controls and that video on Zoom included sound. I realized I was business as usual when I missed my niece's husband's science presentation at the University of Colorado. I now am going to have to put my Zoom meetings on my calendar.

Again Bud and Jan Dragoo told me about attending church online. I have been a regular church goer via the Internet ever since.

My bridge friends told me about playing bridge online. I was invited to a game via Bridge Base Online by our sister bridge club in Sunsites. I tried to sign in, but the last time I played online was 10 years ago, so I had to create a new identity. I did this and was soundly rejected. I had several hours before the game, and after trying everything, including Help, I was about to give up when the director at Sunsites gave me a temporary identity. I was able to play, but my poor partner had to suffer through me trying to master all the upgrades to the game that have occurred over the years. We were skunked the first 8 boards, but we did win a hand or two the second 8 boards. One good outcome. I have now assumed the temporary identity as my permanent username. So bring on the competition; "Whoever I Am" is ready.

On the business side, I was able to negotiate a contract with Grasshopper Landscaping for my Ex. His yard was waist high, and I found the yard company online and filled out the contract online. It took me a while to figure out the electronic signature, but I was determined and completed the contract.

I feel pretty good about my newly acquired skills. I thought doing CFTs by phone was going to be my ultimate achievement, but I am just about ready to become a new me. Bring on technology. With the help of my friends and every ounce of determination that I possess, I am going to upgrade my skills.



A job for Grasshopper Landscaping

Book Review

by Abby Dodge, Cochise County CASA Program Manager

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the library being closed, I had to find this one on Amazon – the Kindle edition is \$5.95 or it's available with Kindle Unlimited. As it turns out, it's not currently available from the Cochise County Library District anyway, unfortunately... But if anyone is interested in reading this book, let me know and we can try to purchase it for our CASA library.

Mine Until: My Journey into and out of the Arms of an Abuser

by Jessica Yaffa

260 pages (2.5 hours of training credit)

There was a warning in the Introduction to the book, that “this account is not G rated. The events and language are real. This book is harsh, violent and sometimes painful to read. But what you are about to experience is my life, for better or worse.”

Well, the warning was not wrong. There are several situations that Jessica experienced that were difficult to read about – but she did a wonderful job of explaining some of the mindset behind the cycle of domestic violence. I've often struggled with understanding why people remain in domestic violence situations, thankfully never

having been through it myself. However, Jessica wrote about the fear that she experienced on the few occasions that she did manage to get away from her abuser, which really helps with this understanding.

Jessica's parents and friends tried to keep her from becoming too entrenched in this violent relationship from the onset. Unfortunately, that only seemed to fuel her desire to remain in the relationship. Eventually, Jessica and Trent, her abuser had a child together.

Jessica tried her hardest to protect her son, Rory, from Trent's abuse, eventually getting Trent arrested. However, it was a difficult road for her both leading up to that point and dealing with the psychological effects of the abuse after his arrest. Jessica entered into a series of relationships that never seemed to help fill the void she was feeling. Eventually, Jessica began attending church and began using her story and her experiences to help others.

Regardless of your personal belief system, I think this book provides significant insight into how one can get sucked into an abusive relationship and how difficult it really is to extricate oneself from that kind of relationship. The book is quite graphic at times, but I think it needed to be to really show what Jessica dealt with in life and how she was eventually able to heal.



Volunteer Appreciation Week - April 2020

OUR HEROES

Volunteer Appreciation Week 2020

<1 YEAR:

| | | |
|----------|---------|----------|
| Heather | Lori | Julie |
| Dora | Manuela | Karen |
| Jim | Arian | Alisha |
| Jo Anna | Nazjah | Michelle |
| Mellyora | Arlene | Monica |

1 YEAR:

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| Stephanie | Misty |
| Lois | Carolyn |
| Jen | Deb |
| Kathi | Alison |
| Dan | |
| Emily | |
| Ellie Mae | |
| Tina | |
| Holly | |

2 YEARS:

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Risa | Johanna |
| Karen | Scott |
| Bill | Jenn |
| Sara | Wallace |
| Verenice | Melissa |

3 YEARS:

Darla
Carol

4 YEARS:

Deb
Cheryl
Lin



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF COCHISE COUNTY

~Continued on next page~

Volunteer Appreciation Week - April 2020 - (Continued)

OUR HEROES

Volunteer Appreciation Week 2020

Chris
5 years

Krista
7 years

Juanita
8 years

Mary Kay
13 years

Bud
16 years

Jan
16 years

LuRue
17 years

Mary
19 years



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF COCHISE COUNTY

CASA of the Month

Julie Pieron

I am pleased to announce that the CASA of the Month for April 2020 is Julie Pieron!

Julie was appointed to her first case on August 12, 2019. This assignment ended on September 18, 2019 – making this one of the shortest yet successful first cases I've seen! However, it helped get Julie's feet wet and prepare her for her second case, which she's been on ever since.

The reason Julie came to mind for CASA of the Month was due to her willingness to step up and make sure that her assigned youth was able to continue attending her same school after an abrupt placement change moved her out of the district. Julie got up early each day, went and picked up her CASA youth, and got her to school. She was also available to pick up her youth after school to help the placement not have to rush to be there on time. Somehow during all of this, Julie still managed to work full-time and not get too far behind (I hope).

This abrupt placement change took place the week before spring break started in Sierra Vista. Julie committed to helping the youth stay at her school until spring break – which now ultimately meant that she was able to finish off the year without changing schools officially – I guess that's one positive from this COVID-19 pandemic!

Julie demonstrated a selfless willingness to support her CASA youth by doing whatever it took to make sure her youth wasn't too disrupted by her placement change. When I asked her about it at the time, she expressed that she couldn't do it forever, but she made it sound like it was a no-brainer to do it temporarily, even with it being almost 100 miles round trip for each pickup or drop-off.

Julie, thank you for everything that you do as a CASA. We're lucky to have you. Keep up the great work!

April 2020



| <div>  May 2020  </div> | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 Brothers and Sisters Day  |
| 3 | 4 Nazjah: Report due for A K-M. | 5 Risa D-C.  | 6 | 7 Monica W.  | 8 Dragoo's: Report due for C case. | 9 |
| 10 <i>Mother's Day</i> | 11 | 12 Mary: Report due for W case. Stephanie: Report due for P/K case. | 13 | 14 Arlene: Report due for H case. | 15 National Chocolate Chip Day  | 16 Love a Tree Day  |
| 17 | 18 No Dirty Dishes Day  | 19 Reports due: -Nolan's (FM). -Monica (D/T). -Karen F (KR). | 20 Pick Strawberries Day  | 21 Alisha S.  | 22 Mary B.  | 23 Lucky Penny Day  |
| 24 Juanita A.  | 25 Michelle: Report due for KB. | 26 | 27 Carol W.  | 28 National Hamburger Day  | 29 | 30 Water a Flower Day  |
| 31 National Macaroon Day  | | | | | | |

Anniversaries

Jen Dorris – 2 years

Since 5/23/2018

Holly LaBombard – 2 years

Since 5/23/2018

Deb Peterson – 2 years

Since 5/25/2018



Juanita Adamson

FCRB, 3/17/20

The Board thanks the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for her ongoing support of M.

Ellie May Frakes

MEO, 4/8/20

The Court thanked Placement and Ms. Frakes, the minor child's CASA.

Arlene Morales and all CASA Volunteers

Email from Judge Kelliher, 4/9/2020

I sure do love those pics...thanks to you and our very special CASAs!! Well done.

Support Groups

Morning



Second Thursday of the Month

10:00am - 12 Noon

Going Virtual
Verlust Kaffee
415 S Second St, Suite C
Sierra Vista, AZ
*Check Email for
more info*

Lunchtime



Fourth Friday of the Month

12:00 Noon - 1:00pm

Going Virtual
Fresh
6290 Hwy 90
(near Hobby Lobby)
Sierra Vista, AZ
*Check Email for
more info*

Evening



Last Tuesday of the Month

6:30 - 8:30pm

*Temporarily
Suspended*
Home of LuRue Feller
2300 S Drive
Sierra Vista, AZ

CASA OF COCHISE COUNTY NEWS & VIEWS

Financial Support



- Does your child have unmet needs?
- Is there anything that financial restrictions are preventing your child from doing that would help your child achieve normalcy?
- Are you wanting to take your child for a special activity - maybe for a birthday - but you're worried about the cost?
- Are you having to drive significant distances each month to see your child?



CCCC,†

Cochise County Council for CASA, Inc.

Is a nonprofit organization that raises funds to the unmet needs of abused neglected and abandoned children in the CASA of Cochise County Program. The primary focus is to ensure that educational progress of CASA children through tutoring and scholarships. In addition the council provides clothing, toys and personal items.

If your CASA child/youth has an unmet need, consider the Cochise County Council for CASA to help!!

Call your CASA Coordinator at 432-7521 OR

Send an email to ADodge@courts.az.gov

***If your child wishes to participate in monthly lessons (gymnastics, martial arts, swimming, etc.), consider applying for a grant from the Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation. Visit their website for more info: www.affcf.org

From the Manual



Guidance for Volunteers



WAYS TO SAFELY STAY IN TOUCH WITH CHILDREN

While we are making many resources available to state organizations and local programs, in the forefront of all of our minds is the welfare of the children we serve and our need to ensure they are well while at the same time balancing the health and safety of our volunteers. We are providing guidance on a number of program and volunteer functions in light of the coronavirus (COVID – 19), while at the same time know you will be following the direction you are receiving from your court, state CASA/GAL organization, child welfare agency and governing authority. This guidance below is not meant to take precedent over direction from these authorities.

In these changing times we want to offer guidance on volunteers communicating with children in an effective and safe way. The volunteer may still visit the child by taking certain steps to limit conduct. For example, the volunteer may go to the child's residence and talk through the door or the window. The volunteer and the child may talk on the phone while looking at each other through the window.

While National CASA/GAL Standard (Standards for Local CASA/GAL Programs 2012 version - Standard 7.E.5.f.) for volunteers to visit the child in person with the child once every 30 days at a minimum, please be reminded that the standard also allows for an exception to this practice. During this time National CASA/GAL is encouraging programs to consider alternatives that will ensure the safety of children, volunteers and staff.

ALTERNATIVES TO FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

Texting: If texting with a child, no confidential information that would disclose specifics about a child's identity or the case should be discussed. Texting should be limited and during reasonable hours. Text conversations should not be deleted until after the case is closed. CASA/GAL volunteers should be aware that any messaging, texting, emailing may be discoverable by the court. Please be sure to review state laws and court rules to determine if text messaging is discoverable in court.

Video Conferencing. CASA/GAL volunteers and staff may use video calls or online chat applications (such as Zoom, Messenger Kids, and FaceTime) to communicate with children.

We recommend the following best practices for video conferencing

- Take the call from a private location with no other people around
- Ask the child if she or he is in a safe place with no others around
- Do not discuss private information about the child (as you do not know who is listening in)
- Do not record the chat (either audio or visual)



From the Manual

- All calls should be prefaced with a verbal disclosure agreement to verify the above parameters are met and agreed upon at the beginning of each call.
- Remember that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when using video chat technology.

National CASA/GAL does not have an age restriction for use of video technology with children. However, the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act sets limits on the use of services like these, along with other Internet sites, by children under the age of 13. In order to comply with COPPA and industry standards, programs may adopt the following practices:

- Place the video call with the phone app on the smart phone. These video calls would not trigger the same COPPA issues as using a platform like FaceTime or Skype.
- Do not have children under 13 create user accounts (and do not create user accounts for them) with the video chat providers
- Do not otherwise provide any personal information about the children to the video chat provider (including through a text chat feature)
- Choose technologies that permit use by children under 13 (Zoom, Messenger Kids, and FaceTime permit use, while Skype does not)

Out of an abundance of caution, the program can seek an order from the court as follows:

- The Court authorizes video conferencing between the child and the CASA volunteer and staff and the court expressly grants consent for this child to use video conferencing technologies for these purposes.

Phone Calls. When talking to a child on the phone, the CASA/GAL volunteer must follow many of the same recommendations as with video chat technology including ensuring you are in a private location with no other people around, that there is no recording taking place, and that no confidential information that would disclose the specifics about a child's identity or the case should be discussed.

CHILDREN IN CONGREGATE CARE

CASA/GAL volunteers should take extra precautions when meeting with children in group homes, emergency shelters and other congregate care placements. Precautions may include alternative to face-to-face meetings like texting, video conferencing and phone calls as well as remaining at a safe distance and following proper hygiene including handwashing for both the child and CASA/GAL volunteer. The CASA/GAL volunteer may wish to discuss proper handwashing, covering of the mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and other safeguards with the child that may be particularly important in congregate care.

TRANSITIONING YOUTH AND YOUTH WITH CHILDREN

During the COVID-19 crisis, youth in foster care who are in independent living and youth with children are especially vulnerable. These youth will need even more support if schools close and transition to virtual learning. Many youth in foster care rely on schools for meals and often do not have access to the internet or technology to support virtual learning. Helping youth and young parents to find community resources for food assistance, health care and helping them to identify ways to access virtual learning (such as libraries) will help them through this difficult time. Youth in foster care living independently also often work hourly as a requirement for housing. These youth will need advocacy and support should businesses close and the youth not be able to

From the Manual



protect their housing and access to assistance. Youth often also rely on cell phones. Helping them to advocate to keep their phones on should they not be able to pay their phone or other utilities is another way to support foster youth. Finally, ensuring that youth know where to access local health and safety resources will help ensure that our youth have the protection they need to weather this crisis.

COURT HEARINGS AND CHILD WELFARE MEETINGS

CASA/GAL volunteers shall follow the precautions and procedures recommended by the court for all court hearings. The CASA/GAL program may wish to discuss with the court the ability for the CASA/GAL volunteer to appear telephonically in court if necessary. The same should hold true with child welfare meetings. If the agency has issued procedures concerning these meetings, the program and CASA/GAL volunteer should adhere to those procedures. If not, the CASA/GAL volunteer may wish to participate via conference call.





From the Manual

Helping Children Cope During and After a Disaster A Resource for Parents and Caregivers

The amount of damage caused from a disaster can be overwhelming. The destruction of homes and separation from school, family, and friends can cause a great amount of stress and anxiety for children. They may not fully understand what is going on. A child's reaction and signs of stress may vary depending on age and previous experiences and typical coping behavior with stress.

What You Can Do to Help Children Cope with a Disaster

Set a good example by managing your own stress through healthy lifestyle choices, such as eating healthy, exercising regularly, getting plenty of sleep, and avoiding drugs and alcohol. When you are prepared, rested, and relaxed, you can respond better to unexpected events and can make decisions in the best interest of your loved ones.

The following tips can help reduce stress before, during, and after a disaster or traumatic event.

Before

- Assure your children that you are prepared to keep them safe.
- Review safety plans before a disaster or emergency happens. Having a plan will increase your children's confidence and help give them a sense of control.

During

- Stay calm and reassure your children.

After

- Talk to your children about what is happening in a way that they can understand. Keep it simple and appropriate for each child's age.
- Give your children opportunities to talk about what they went through. Encourage them to share concerns and ask questions.
- Encourage your children to take action directly related to the disaster so they feel a sense of control. For example, children can help others after a disaster, such as volunteering to help community or family members in a safe environment. Children should NOT participate in disaster cleanup activities for health and safety reasons.
- Because parents, teachers, and other adults see children in different situations, it is important for them to work together to share information about how each child is coping after a traumatic event.
- Help your children to have a sense of structure, which can make them feel more at ease or provide a sense of familiarity. Once schools and child care opens again, help them return to their regular activities.

Common Reactions

The common reactions to distress will fade over time for most children. Children who were directly exposed to a disaster can become upset again and behavior related to the event may return if

~Continued on next page~



From the Manual

Helping Children Cope During and After a Disaster (Continued)

they see or hear reminders. If children continue to be very upset or if their reactions hurt their relationships or schoolwork, parents may want to talk to a professional or have their children talk to someone who specializes in children's emotional needs.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/index.html>

Taken from CS305921-A, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention factsheet dated May 3, 2019



For Infants to 2-Year-Olds

Infants may become more cranky. They may cry more than usual or want to be held and cuddled more.



For 3 to 6-Year-Olds

They may have toileting accidents, bed-wetting, tantrums and a hard time sleeping, or be frightened about being separated from their parents/caregivers.



For 7 to 10-Year-Olds

Older children may feel sad, mad, or afraid that the event will happen again. Correct misinformation the child may get from others.



For Preteens and Teenagers

Some preteens and teenagers respond to trauma by acting out or feeling afraid to leave the home. Their overwhelming emotions may lead to increased arguing and even fighting with siblings, parents/caregivers or other adults.



For Special Needs Children

Children with physical, emotional, or intellectual limitations may have stronger reactions to a threatened or actual disaster. Children with special needs may need extra words of reassurance, more explanations about the event, and more comfort and other positive physical contact such as hugs from loved ones.



CASA of Arizona

VOLUNTEER



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Volunteer your time to change children's lives



4.6K people like this. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

<https://www.azcourts.gov/>